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S E R M O N,

P R E A C H E D

In the Cathedral Church of SARUM,

B E F O R E T H E

R E S I D E N T, G O V E R N O R S, and other E N -

C O U R A G E R S

O F T H E

G E N E R A L I N F I R M A R Y,

On FRIDAY the 28th of SEPTEMBER, 1770.

By N. O G L E, D.D.

DEAN of WINCHESTER,

And CANON RESID. of SARUM.

SALISBURY:

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M,DCC,LXX.

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SALISBURY INFIRMARY, Sept. 28, 1770.

Resolved, *Nemine Contradicente*,

THAT the Thanks of this Anniversary Meeting be given to the Rev. the DEAN of WINCHESTER, for the Sermon this Day preached by him, at the Request of the Society; and that he be desired to deliver a Copy of the same to the Secretary, in order that it may be printed.

RADNOR, President.

By Order of the Governors,

JOHN TURNER, Secretary.



T O

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE THE EARL OF
PEMBROKE, VISITOR,

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE THE EARL OF
RADNOR, PRESIDENT,

AND TO THE REST OF THE NOBILITY AND
GENTRY, GOVERNORS OF THIS INFIRMARY.

THIS SERMON, PREACHED AND PUBLISHED AT THEIR
REQUEST, IS, WITH ALL DUE RESPECT, INSCRIBED,

BY THEIR

VERY FAITHFUL

AND OBEDIENT SERVANT,

N. OGLE.

T O

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE THE EARL OF

SPENCER, VISITOR

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE THE EARL OF

SPENCER, VISITOR

AND TO THE REST OF THE NOBILITY AND

MEMBERS OF THE PARLIAMENT

THEIR LORDSHIPS AND LORDS OF THE

HOUSE OF COMMONS, UNITED

THEIR

VERY FAITHFUL

AND OBEISANT SERVANT

WILLIAM C. L. E.

A SERMON, &c.

LUKE x CHAP. VERSE 35.

AND ON THE MORROW WHEN HE DEPARTED, HE TOOK OUT TWO-PENCE, AND GAVE THEM TO THE HOST, AND SAID UNTO HIM, "TAKE CARE OF HIM; AND WHATSOEVER THOU SPENDEST MORE, WHEN I COME AGAIN, I WILL REPAY THEE."

THIS parable of the good Samaritan is admirably well calculated to remove all partial notions of benevolence, and to convey to us at once, in the strongest and clearest manner, the nature and extent of that duty. We are instantly led to answer the question ourselves; a conviction which is always the most pleasing; nor do we find the least difficulty in deciding "who

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is our neighbour?" (i. e.) Who is intitled to acts of mercy and kindness at our hands.

To this purpose of enlarging the heart, and of curing those prejudices which it is so apt to entertain, has this parable often been happily applied: the intention of it is in general so well known and understood, that I shall not farther endeavour to explain it; I shall only consider that circumstance mentioned in the text, that "on the morrow when he departed, he took out * two-pence, and gave them to the host; and said unto him, "Take care of him, and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee." We may here observe, that the good Samaritan not only obeyed those instinctive dictates of benevolence, which God, for the sake of others, has implanted in our breasts; that he was not only led to give the wounded man immediate assistance, "binding up

* This expression of two-pence, conveys an insignificant idea to those who are ignorant that the money here alluded to was the Roman *denarius*; two of which, in our money, are equal to fifteen-pence half-penny, a sum perhaps of still more relative value in Judea.

his wounds, and pouring in † oil and wine," but that, with a well-directed charitable foresight, he provided for him, till he should be able to take care of himself, "Take care of him, and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee."

To a prudent and discerning mind the mode of doing good will generally present itself together with the desire of doing it. If we mean to be of service to our fellow-creatures, we shall be studious to find out the way in which we can be most so. For perfect as society may at present seem, there yet remain many blanks to be filled up in the great plan of social good: the nature of these depend upon the particular condition of society, and must therefore vary as circumstances vary; but the principle which constitutes the action virtuous, is at all times the same: it is Benevolence, or the desire of doing good to others. That particular mode indeed of expressing our

† Oil and wine are said to have been used by the ancients on these occasions. Indeed they are still in use with us, though under another form and name. These circumstances however are of little moment: this is a parable, and not a true history, all therefore that is requisite is verisimilitude, and consistency in the description.

benevolence, which may at one time be productive of the end proposed, may at another time cease to be so. Thus to discharge the expences of any person we may meet upon the road, or to give an unlimited commission for such acts of generosity, would, however well intended, answer no good end; nay, would at last be productive of a very bad one; but to provide for the possible wants of one destitute, wounded, and unable to help himself, carries with it meaning and good sense. It therefore follows, that no general mode of doing good can be prescribed, which shall at all times, and in all circumstances, produce equal good effects: alterations in the manners and circumstances of a people are continually taking place; cunning and self-interest are perpetually at work, endeavouring to divert even the channels of benevolence to the mean purposes of private emolument. What machine is there so perfect which is not each moment insensibly varying from its end? and which does not some time or other call for the regulating hand of the maker? It is the same with every human institution: nor are the best and most disinterested plans, which benevolence itself has formed, exempt from this universal law of decay.

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It is owing to this continual change in the manners and circumstances of the world, that improvements not only become possible, but even necessary. Old things are done away, and new ones take place, not merely from the superior merit of the latter, but from the necessary alteration of human affairs, and from the too general perversion of all antient institutions.

AGREEABLE to these principles we may observe, that the increase of Social intercourse, of Knowledge, of Art, of Commerce, of Riches, has opened to us a new mode of doing good, that of County Infirmaries: a kind of charity, which, if not complete, is yet manifestly so well adapted to our present manners, and is in most counties so capable of being put in execution, that it well deserves the encouragement which it so universally meets with. Every man is not now obliged to wait till the sick and wounded be accidentally thrown in his way: they are brought to him, and, without farther trouble, or avocation from his own business, he may, in effect, say, "Take care of them, and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee." I would not have it understood, that every scheme, which is dignified with the
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name of charity, has an equal demand upon us for support. I have already made, and shall make a further distinction on that head. It is the *present* propriety and good effects of this institution which I mean to urge in its favour. When *these* shall cease, or when this noble institution shall be perverted to mean purposes, or degenerate into dull *routine*, then let it share the fate it deserves, and give place to something better. At present the good effects of it are so obvious, so universally admitted, that it may almost seem needless to enlarge upon them.—Yet surely there is a propriety, and, I hope, a use, in thus recalling your attention to the great obligations of doing good; and in setting before you the peculiar advantages attending this mode of doing it.

THE best and strongest pleas in favour of all such good works, will ever be those which are most obvious: nor is it perhaps on this, or on any other subject of duty, that we so much want to be taught what we know not, as to be reminded of what we know: for surely what the Apostle says is true, that “ We are taught of God to love one another.”

FAR from being sufficient of ourselves to our own happiness, we are connected with our fellow-

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low-creatures by many wants, interests, and affections, and more so still by a kind of sympathy, which is the result of our frame, and which it is our duty, as well as our highest gratification, to cultivate and indulge. We all, like members of the same body, stand in mutual need of each other, and on these our mutual wants and dependencies, arises the fabric of all our enjoyments. That any of God's creatures should want those innocent means of happiness, which to others are indulged in such abundance, is at first sight apt to shock an equitable and generous mind : but when such a person further reflects, that an universal equality is an impossible, as well as undesirable thing ; and that the difference of conditions contributes to the well-being of the whole, by increasing this mutual dependence of individuals, and by preventing that rivalry and those animosities which would attend a state of perfect equality ; when he considers that each condition has its peculiar portion of happiness ; and that riches only pass through the hands of some for the encouragement of industry in others ; above all, when he considers that the accumulation of wealth in one part, allows it to be let out more easily on those parts where poverty and distress call for it ; or, in other words, when he sees the

poor

poor possessed of a fund in the wealth of the rich, he will be led to allow even a degree of wisdom and design in this irregularity: but then, he will be tempted thus to reason with himself: “ By this unequal distribution of riches I am indeed a gainer, and that without any merit of my own; my being rich, necessarily implies that others should be poor; if then from this constitution of things, by which I am a gainer, an unavoidable degree of evil accrue to others, it becomes my duty, as much as possible, to remedy this defect. * The giver of all things, who
allows

* It seems to have been by the first generous impulses of this kind that the converts at Jerusalem were actuated, when (as we read in Acts ii. 44, 45,) they sold their possessions, that they might minister to the relief of their poor brethren. This degree of benevolence and public spirit might be of service, for the support of a cause just then in its infancy, and might be allowed, 1st, As it proceeded from a good principle. 2dly, As it was impossible that it should ever become a general practice. But, after all, it appears, even there, to have been only allowed, and by no means enjoined; as we may gather from what St. Peter says to Ananias, Acts v. 4.—If we even suppose them injudiciously rash in such a step, it is nevertheless no reflection on their religion. Man is so imperfect a creature, that nothing great perhaps can be done, by any body of men, without the assistance of passion, or what is sometimes

allows this degree of partial evil, allows it only because he has left in my hand a remedy for it, and, in this light, I esteem myself as entrusted with this superfluity, that I may, as from a reservoir, water the thirsty places, and make the barren wilderness smile. Should I refuse this, it must be by resisting the strongest impulse of my nature, the voice of God speaking within my breast; I should, by so doing, justly incur his displeasure, who has strongly inculcated this duty by every precept, natural as well as positive; and who, lest man, infatuated by the selfish charms of pleasure, should forget this obligation, has in the revelation of his will, insisted more on it than on any other." Thus will an ingenuous mind reason with itself on this occasion,—nor can we possibly put this duty in a stronger light than by thus attending to the unbiaſſed reasoning of our own minds. The author of the book of Job has not failed to take it in this fine point of view: "If I rejoiced, says he, because my wealth was great, and because my hand had gotten much; if I withheld the poor from their desire, or caused the eyes of the widow to fail;

times called enthusiasm. So that this circumstance, when seen in its proper light, is far from deserving the ridicule thrown upon it, by *Mr. Hume, in his essays.*

if I have eaten my morsel by myself alone, and the fatherless have not eaten thereof, what shall I do when God ariseth, and when he visiteth what shall I answer him? Did not he that made me in the womb, make him also; did not one fashion us in the womb?"

It is not in the power of language to place the obligation to justice and benevolence in a stronger light than is done in a very few words in this elegant passage. Pass we on then to consider that mode of doing good, in which we are now engaged.

PRIVATE charity, tho' perhaps the most meritorious of all our works, and what we wish not to discourage or supplant by multiplying public subscriptions, is yet evidently unequal to many distresses of life; to none perhaps so much as to those which require the help of science and medicine. It is this circumstance which adds so much propriety to the attempt of uniting the efforts of the benevolent in public hospitals. The high civilized state of this country, the general increase of knowledge, and of social and commercial intercourse, allow, and even lead, to the execution of these public plans; which, in a
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more barbarous age, in a more unconnected state of civil society, it would be idle to attempt. And at the same time that this civilized state of things is favourable to these public institutions, these institutions are in their turn favourable to science and to civilization.

THE general experience of this is undoubtedly at the bottom of the many public charities which distinguish the present age. All of them, I hope, in their respective ways, increase the sum total of good to society, and help to palliate that mixture of evil which has unfortunately crept into the affairs of this world: but some there are amongst these public institutions whose utility is more apparent; some there are, which, if well administered, can never cease to be useful: whilst there are others, to which bounds seem to be set by the very nature of society itself; and which, if multiplied or carried beyond such a point, must, by certain ill effects, counterbalance all the good they were intended to promote. He who assists the poor in the common wants of life, does a good and commendable action; he who carries them thro' the pains and perils of child-birth; he who takes upon

himself the care of their indigent or deserted offspring: all these, and many more, are charities praise-worthy in their several kinds. Yet even in these there is a possibility that charity may be carried to such a pitch as even to defeat its own end; by encouraging sloth, or by inducing idle persons to depend too much on such assistance. For it is not intended by God that mankind should be delivered from the *natural* cares and duties of life. Parents should not be wholly detached from the care of their offspring, nor the husband from attention to his wife. Children owe their parents a requital of the kindnesses they have received; and were it even possible to deliver men from all trouble and anxiety of this kind, whatever good might in one sense be done, would perhaps be overbalanced by ill effects to society in another. Besides, to these domestic cares, however painful, there is a pleasure annexed: God, by annexing this pleasure to the duty, visibly intends that we should not be wholly exempted from it. The natural cares then, and labours of life, (if I may be allowed the distinction,) are useful both in a civil and in a moral sense. In the former, by finding employment for the passions and active faculties of men, and by thus preventing their becoming mischievous

chievous to each other. In a moral sense they do good, by calling forth and improving the tender feelings and social affections, without which life itself is not worth having: by shewing us that every man is by God appointed, in one sense or other, “ to go forth to his labour until the evening;” “ that he is born to trouble and pain;” and, “ that we are strangers and sojourners here, all as our fathers were.” He who would wholly deliver any order of men from these cares and troubles, would do them no good either in a civil or in a religious sense. Some kinds of charity then may have their bounds, may, more or less, partake of whim; or, by easing men of the domestic and natural expences of society, may enable them to indulge more in the vices of extravagance.

How far these effects may be taking place in the metropolis of this kingdom; how far it is prudent to provide every temptation of convenience, in order to draw inhabitants to that over-grown place; how far it may tend to weaken the natural tie of *relations dear, and all the charities of father, brother, son*; and what may be the consequence of substituting mechanical in the room of sentimental charity, deserves perhaps the consideration of thinking men. Nor is the observation foreign to the business

finess of this day. I should not have made it, were it not beyond dispute obvious, how free the public-spirited design in which we are here engaged, is from every imputation of this sort. The intention of *our* infirmary is to relieve the *extraordinary*, the *adventitious* evils of life; not merely the *natural* wants of it. These we would wish only in some cases to alleviate; the former, it were well could we wholly cure and remove. For can there be too many broken limbs restored to health; can there be too many released from the tortures of the stone, or from those various hurts and maladies, which, under God, in this place admit of cure, at least of great alleviation? Our Saviour, in the acts of mercy recorded of him, seems to justify this distinction between the natural and adventitious evils of life. We do not find his power exerted in easing men of the inconveniencies and cares to which they were naturally subject, or from the discharge of those painful duties to which they were in their several stations called, though he was equally able to have done all this; but we may observe him continually employed in curing the lame, the deaf, and the blind; “and in heal-
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ing all manner of sickness and disease among the people."

ANOTHER plea in favour of *our* infirmary is, that we have not in this place any multiplicity of public charities, which can in any way interfere with each other, and thereby dissipate the effects of that benevolence which is implanted in man for the good of the whole; and which, when spread abroad into too many rills, is often extinguished and lost.

Our scheme is a grand and simple one; that of taking the poor mechanic, the labourer, the peasant from his cottage, where he lay smothered, perhaps, amidst a numerous offspring, destitute of all medical aid, and deprived even of the common benefits of wholesome air and diet. His labour was his only support; what then must he do when that resource fails? "Poverty cometh then as one that travelleth, and want as an armed man." Every hour sees him poorer and more distressed; the small resources of former industry are soon exhausted, or are perhaps already become a prey to some impudent pretender to medicine, who gleans a miserable livelihood from
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the credulity and fears of the ignorant. — This, believe me, is not the least evil which these infirmaries are calculated to remove. It is for the relief then of such *extraordinary* distress that we are united in this salutary scheme; and such are the manners and circumstances of the age in which we live, that the scheme is not only practicable, but is already brought to a considerable degree of perfection. The poorest man may now, not only partake of every reasonable convenience in his sickness, but of the best assistance which his country affords, and that too at a very small expence to the public. In short, as much as a well-constructed machine, which at one stroke performs the work of an hundred hands, exceeds the labour of any single person, so much does this species of charity excel in its effects all private attempts of the kind.

THERE is another convenience attending these Infirmaries, a convenience which by no means ought to be overlooked. The regularity and composure which reign, or which ought to reign there, are particularly favourable to those religious sentiments which providence visibly intends should force themselves upon us in the hour of distress. When the mind is humbled by sickness, when
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the passions are calmed, and no temptations at hand, to counterbalance the weight of good advice ; then is it in our power to make those good impressions which time perhaps may never efface : this ought not to be neglected ; for thus may your charity be made to have a double good effect, not only by restoring a useful member to society, but by restoring him a better man, more orderly, more industrious, more contented and resigned to his lot here, and better prepared for an hereafter.

I CANNOT conclude without recurring once more to my first position, that the merit of all public institutions must be estimated by their actual good effects : that with a change of manners and circumstances we must look for an alteration in the effects of every institution, and that therefore no mode of doing good can be prescribed, which shall at all times prove equally efficacious. External causes, or internal defects, may give a wrong direction to our best endeavours, and may, in the end, make a public charity a public incumbrance. No establishment therefore can go well on if left wholly to itself : rust will clog the wheels, or accidents impair the powers of the

machine. It is your business then, Gentlemen, and believe me, it is not the smallest part of your charity, to guard against these natural principles of decay, to which every thing human is exposed ; and, from time to time, so to regulate and direct the powers of this subscription, that under all changes, and in all circumstances, it may best attain the great end proposed, **THE HEALTH AND PRESERVATION OF THE INDUSTRIOUS POOR.** Whilst it thus continues to be the object of your care and attention, it cannot well be subject to those abatements and drawbacks which threaten so many other public charities ; but may, we hope, subsist for ages, like the beneficial works of creation itself, stable, and without decay : then may we safely join in this prayer, **ESTO PERPETUA.** “ God will prosper the work of our hands, The “ Lord will prosper our handy work.”

F I N I S.

